(c) whether debentures have been issued by the Bank; and

(d) if so, the worth of debentures in crores, issued in the market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL):

(a) ICICI Bank Ltd. has not been merged with any foreign company.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) As on 31st March, 2008, ICICI Bank Ltd. has outstanding debentures of Rs. 19017.28 crore.

Anomalies in pay scales recommended by the Fifth Central Pay Commission

†2417. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:'

(a) Whether it is a fact that there were anomalies in the pay scales of several Departments including BSNL, as recommended by the Fifth Central Pay Commission;

(b) if so, whether these anomalies were removed; and

(c) the precautions being taken to prevent such anomalies in the pay scales as recommended by the Sixth Central Pay Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUAMR BANSAL): (a) and (b) After the submission of the Report of the Fifth Central Pay Commission, an agreement was reached with the staff side as to what was to constitute an anomaly on account of recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission. All the anomalies covered under this defination were processed through the Anomalies Committee at the National Level and the Departmental level. Certain anomalies, on which final decisions could not be taken before setting up of the Sixth Central Pay Commission, were also brought to the notice of that Commission.

(c) The Report of the Sixth Central Pay Commission has recently been submitted to the Government. A new system of running pay bands and grade pay has been recommended by the Commission. It has been indicated by the Pay Commission in para 1.2.20 of their report that as a result of introudction of the proposed system of running pay bands and grade pay, a large number of these anomalies would be automatically settled.

Provision of loans at cheaper interest rates for SC/ST youths

†2418. SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) youths are being provided loan at cheaper interest rates and without any guarantee to begin their business; and

(b) if so, the details of business which the youths of these Castes and Tribes were provided loans at cheaper interest rates during the last three years?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Under the Differential Rates of Interest (DRI) Scheme, scheduled commercial banks can provide individual loans up to Rs. 15,000/- at concessional rate of interest of 4% p.a. to the weaker sections for engaging in productive and gainful activities. The Scheme requires that not less than 40 per cent of the total advances granted under DRI Scheme go to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised the borrower's eligibility criteria for annual family income under DRI Scheme from Rs. 6,400 to Rs. 18,000 in rural areas and from Rs. 7,200 to Rs. 24,000 in urban areas. In addition, members of SCs/STs satisfying the income criteria of the Scheme can also avail of housing loan up to Rs. 20,000/- per beneficiary over and above the individual loan of Rs. 15,000/- available under the Scheme. No guarantee is required for these loans, provided they satisfy the laid down eligibility criteria for the Scheme.

No collateral is required for loans to Small Scale Industry units up to Rs. 5 lakh. For units in the service and business sector, no collateral is required for projects upto Rs. 2 lakh. CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterpirses) also extends credit guarantee cover for collateral free loans upto Rs. 50 lakhs by Member Lending Institutions (Scheduled Commercial Banks, selected Regional Rural Banks and other lending institutions).

(b) As reported by RBI, they do not collate data separately on credit facilities provided to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes youths.

Use of muscleman for recovery of loans by banks

2419. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the Private Sector Banks are using muscleman to recover loans;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether most of such complaints have been registered against ICICI Bank; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government against such complaints and banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (d) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken up with banks, for appropriate action, the media reports in respect of the banks engaging musclemen and harassing the defaulting customers for recovery of loans. In many such instances, the excesses were alleged to have been committed by the recovery agents of the resepctive banks. The number of complaints of alleged harassment received against ICICI Bank has been more.

In view of the alleged harassment of customers by ICICI Bank's recovery agents, and the judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court, on an appeal (No. 267 of 2007) filed by ICICI Bank Ltd. against the order of the Allahabad High Court in respect of a case filed by one of the borrowers of the bank, Smt. Prakash Kaur, the bank was advised by RBI in August 2007 to investigate and take action against the recovery agents involved, review at the highest levels the system of appointing/reviewing performance of recovery agents, undertake comprehensive review of customer complaints, etc. In October, 2007, RBI, also advised the Bank that if such incidents recur in future, RBI would be constrained to take strern action.